

COLUMBIA RIVER INTERTRIBAL FISH COMMISSION
JOINT STAFF REPORT - WINTER SHEET NO. 3b
Columbia River Compact
February 19, 2020

Fisheries Under Consideration: Treaty commercial gillnet
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Detailed information on stock status and management guidelines for Columbia River fisheries are presented in Joint Staff Reports, which are produced annually and available on-line. The most recent reports are the 2020 Sturgeon/Smelt Report (January 17, 2020) and the 2020 spring/summer report for Chinook, sockeye, steelhead, and other species (February 7, 2020). Links to the on-line reports are: <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/crc/> and <http://www.dfw.state.or.us/fish/OSCRP/CRM/reports.asp>

RIVER CONDITIONS

- The current outflow at the John Day Dam has ranged from approximately 160 kcfs to 198 kcfs in the past five days. The 5-year average flow in this time period is approximately 194 kcfs.
- The recent 5 day average temperature in the John Day Dam tailrace is 40.5°F, which is slightly higher than the 5-year average temperature of 38.8°F.

STOCK STATUS

Sturgeon

- The 2020 sturgeon treaty commercial harvest guidelines for Treaty fisheries in Zone 6 are 500 fish for the Bonneville Pool, 415 for The Dalles Pool, and 210 fish for the John Day Pool.
- There is not a specific harvest guideline for the treaty subsistence catch of sturgeon, but these catches are accounted for, reported, and used in population assessments. Subsistence harvest typically occurs in association with fisheries targeting other species and is generally low. In 2019, the subsistence harvest was just 140 in all three Zone 6 reservoirs combined.

2020 TREATY INDIAN WINTER FISHERIES

- A setline fishery occurs each January in all three Zone 6 pools under permanent regulations. This fishery generally has low effort and catch. This year's catches were slightly above average, but within past ranges. A commercial gillnet fishery was initially set to run between February 1 and February 8 in The Dalles and John Day pools only. Due to higher than expected catches in The Dalles Pool, the tribes took action to close The Dalles Pool fishery on February 7. The John Day Pool closed as planned on February 8.
- A second setline fishery was held in the John Day Pool only February 12 to February 17.
- Current preliminary catches are shown in the table below. These include both ticketed landings and direct to public sales.
- Catch rates generally start out slow and increase over time as water temperature and effort increase. Catches in the John Day Pool have been less than anticipated, but have started to increase. They have averaged close to 5 fish per day to date. The planned fishery assumes catches could increase to over 16 fish per day.

Preliminary Total Treaty Commercial Sturgeon Landings

	January Setline	Winter Gillnet	Total	Guideline	Remaining	% of guideline
Bonneville	127	0	127	500	373	25%
The Dalles	113	300	413	415	2	100%
John Day	42	75	122	210	88	56%
Total	282	375	662			

- No steelhead have been harvested in the winter gillnet fishery to date, but 5 winter steelhead have been caught in the platform fishery in the Bonneville Pool.
- Steelhead caught upstream of The Dalles Dam from November 1-June 30 are counted as part of the A/B-Index summer steelhead return. There are no specific harvest limits for steelhead in winter season fisheries but the steelhead catch is low in the winter season averaging 69 in The Dalles and John Day pools since 2001 with no recorded catch during the winter gillnet fishery in the past seven years. The highest observed catch since 2001 was 306 in 2008. Because of generally low steelhead harvest in the winter gillnet fishery, no specific management actions regarding steelhead are expected to be needed. No chinook are expected to be present in the gillnet fishery.
- Steelhead caught in the Bonneville Pool from November 1 through March 31 are counted as winter steelhead. There is no specific harvest limit for winter steelhead but harvest is generally low. Winter steelhead harvest has averaged 110 fish per year since 2001. Because harvest is generally low, no specific management actions regarding steelhead are expected to be needed. No chinook are expected to be harvested in Bonneville Pool during the winter period.
- The four Columbia River treaty tribes will or have adopted regulations consistent with the following:

<i>2020 Treaty Indian Winter Season Commercial Gillnet Fishery</i>	
Season:	6 AM Thursday February 20 to 6 PM Monday February 24 (4.5) days
Area:	John Day Pool only
Gear:	Gillnets with no minimum mesh size restriction
Sanctuaries:	Closed areas include standard closed dam and river mouth areas applicable to gillnet gear
Allowable Sales:	Salmon (any species), steelhead, shad, yellow perch, bass, walleye, catfish, and carp may be sold or retained for subsistence. Sturgeon from 43 to 54 inches fork length in John Day pool may be sold or kept for subsistence purposes. Fish landed during the open periods are allowed to be sold after the period concludes.
Additional:	24-hour quick reporting required for Washington buyers, pursuant to WAC 220-352-315 except that landings must be reported within 24-hours of completing the fish ticket.

- No Compact action is needed in the platform and hook and line fishery.

Future Meetings

The tribes may request a Compact Hearing on Wednesday February 26 to consider additional commercial fisheries.